Bhool Gaya nahi Kuch

The passionate lover of the film *Julie*, Vikram Makandar is flirting with TV these days, discovers Renuka Suryanarayan

VIKRAM MAKANDAR hasn't forgotten his *Bhool gaya sub kuch* days, but the one-hit wonder man (of *Julie* fame) is too much of a survivor to languish in memories. He's now a part of the bigamy brigade on TV megas like *Swabhimaan*.

Sitting at his Pali Hill residence, the conversation flits back and forth from TV to films and and it's easy to see that he loves producing films. He's also excited about Oyster Club, the latest venture that is a part of Vikram Productions, which will promote entertainment and talent across the city. "For a nominal fee, a member will receive tickets for any entertainment or cultural programme of his choice in the city. Talented members will be given a platform to showcase their talent." In fact, it was the cradle-death of his film career that laid the seeds for this club. "My film stint ended in 1979 because I didn't have the right strategies, the right secretary and came to know later that films that I had rejected became hits with Jeetender in the lead," says the veteran actor who will now help budding talent in learning the ropes.

"Today serials only need parrots who can mug up lines, which I don't enjoy as an actor. Pakistani TV serials are so interesting, since every word has a punch and every line has a meaning and strong undercurrents. But on Indian TV, the bottomline is, if you have a lot of *saas-bahu* drama, you will get advertisers," he rues. The leading man of films like *Swami, Admi Sadak ka, Toofan* and *Patita*, he recalls how he was hauled straight from the FTII onto the sets of *Julie* and told to do a passionate sequence. "I don't even know the lines of the song," he protested, to Mr Deaf Ears, director who barked, "*Sub kuch maloom ho jayega, jao*," and pushed him in front of the harsh lights. But this small-town Hubli boy had not chased tinsel dreams from childhood for nothing. So he went up to the heroine Lakshmi and said, "Can you wear your hair loose, please. I can make love easier that way." She did just that, and whenever Vikram couldn't make out the line of the song, he'd go straight into her hair! Fortunately for him, the producer thought it was some classy, international love scene!

In between, he had an affair with film production, "But the film *Situm* starring Smita Patil and Naseeruddin Shah made me realise that I may have to go to shady film financiers which went against my grain." His passion now is to act and produce good films on a small budget and is inspired by the likes of Sunil Dutt, Raj Kapoor, Bimal Roy Asif and Mehboob Khan. He's currently producing two TV serials and four films, and one of the serials that he's acted in with Farah, *Kaash Tum Mere Hote*, is ready to roll on one of the main channels. But his tryst with TV doesn't end there since three other serials in various stages of production will go on air shortly.